Measuring What Matters:
Making Progress Toward Expected Family Outcomes

Brandi Black Thacker: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our first Measuring What Matters: Making Progress Toward Expected Family Outcomes Webinar. We are so happy that you're here with us. It's the top of the hour and without further ado we'd love to introduce you to one of our most favorite folks, I'm sure, and yours, Kiersten Beigel from the Office of Head Start.

Kiersten Beigel: Hi, everybody. Welcome, welcome, welcome. I'm so glad you could join us for this webinar series, Measuring What Matters. You can see our welcome mat here. It's the house of PFCE. We have a few questions for you to consider. We know that you have been asking yourself these questions because we do build our resources and training around what you tell us you need. But, if you have been asking yourself, how do I understand and measure the effects of my efforts for the good of families and children? Or if you've been wondering how do you measure program progress related to parent, family, and community engagement? Or, for that matter, how does the PFCE Framework relate to data activities? How can you measure progress toward goals and objectives in your five year planning? Any of these questions.

If they've crossed your mind, they've been on our mind too and that's why we've developed this series for you. So, you have come to the right place if you're wondering these things. What we've centered our webinar series around are the Four Data Activities and making some connections for you across these Four Data Activities to the work that you do in Head Start and Early Head Start. So, starting with prepare. This is where we think about getting ready for data collection and thinking about the different kinds of data that you need. And also what you already have that you can use to better understand your work with families. Moving clockwise to collect: how to gather data that's useful and easy to interpret. Today's webinar is going to be focusing on prepare and collect. But Thursday's webinar will focus on aggregate and analyze and use and share. So, moving down the arrows there. Aggregate and analyze. This is about learning ways you can look at data to examine how well your program and families, particularly related to the broad outcomes identified in the PFCE Framework. Kind of looking at those outcomes and thinking about your data.

And then lastly, use and share. Here's where we're talking about understanding the importance of sharing data in ways that are accurate, appealing, and accessible. And thinking about strategies for using data to inform different aspects of your program and what you do on the day to day. So. We do have one additional webinar next Tuesday, which is going to be taking a look at all four of these data activities and how one program in Region I in Vermont thought about the data activities and PFCE outcomes. So we have that to look forward to, as well. Kicking us off, I'm just going to lean in here on the learning objectives. What we'd love to do today is help you to use our Measuring What Matters Data Exercise Series. You'll hear more about that. You have an exercise that corresponds to each of the Four Data Activities. So four different exercises in total.

As I said, we're going to focus in on prepare and collect -- two data activities today. And then thirdly, how you can think about making those connections. Right? So, to the Framework, the five-year planning, to your everyday work across the data activities. So, without further ado, thanks again for your participation. Welcome again. I hope you get a lot out of this. And I'd love, now, to turn it over to Brandi Black Thacker who introduced me in the first place. She's our T/TA Director for the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I'm sure many of you know her. Brandi?

Brandi: Thanks, Kiersten, and thanks everybody, again, for being with us. Those of you who have been out on the road with us and have seen the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement anywhere lately, you know that this is one of our most favorite topics. Measuring what matters, thinking about family progress, and really talking to you guys about where you are, what you're doing, all the incredible things that are happening right in your programs beside your families and communities. It's been something that has just been extremely rewarding and incredibly exciting. And I think that we've been making together some wonderful strides.

So, thank you for joining us today. Hopefully again on Thursday and next Tuesday, as Kiersten mentioned, as well. What I'd like to kick us off with, in addition to what Kiersten gave us in sort of laying our foundation, are what some of you have probably seen in our seminal document, the Measuring What Matters document that came out last winter. We talk about the Four R's. The thing that I love the most about the Four R's is that they really resonate with us in the Head Start and Early Head Start community because they're so grounded in what we've always known and believed. But just like all things early childhood we to have some alliteration, a lot of the same letter going on, so we could ground a lot of this good thinking in a memorable way.

So, let's look at this. The Four R's as it relates to measuring what matters, and specifically family progress, really guides what we do to make decisions, evaluate our program progress, and identify any changes that we want to make over time. Again, not foreign concepts to what we've always known and done within the Head Start and Early Head Start community through our continuous quality improvement work. But what's wonderful about this as we think about it beside families, is that it grounds us in a way. For instance, with that first "R" in responsible. Thinking about our data and making sure it's high quality. And making sure that it's accurate and it paints an accurate picture, not only of our children, which we've been used to doing.

Our families, which we're really growing in, but certainly thinking about our staff, program, and community, as well. Also, in terms of responsible, making sure that our data are used in a timely manner, that we maximize our information, but minimize the time and effort that we invest not only on our families' behalves, but our own, as well. And then uplifting anything that we think may be the appropriate uses of the information or any limitations. And I'll tell you guys what's been coming up as we've been traveling around the country. For instance, several of you -- if you've seen the new five-year project period grant application, the one that was just released on April , you know that there's a little nudge that says, as appropriate, to start thinking about family progress in connection to children's progress. So exciting! Some of you have said, "Oh whoa, we've really started to think about looking at families or a smaller subset of our families, and the progress they're making on certain things." Whether it's stress levels.

Whether it's -- Or for instance, if you serve Early Head Start and its new mamas who may be experiencing post-partum depression, if they've made strides over time. Looking at the growth or progress that they've made and correlating it, for instance, to social-emotional development of their children. What you've done, under the umbrella of responsible, is made a note about a limitation, for instance. We don't know quite yet if our intervention or our prevention or our partnership beside the family is completely responsible for something like this. But we're intrigued. We want to know more so we're going to replicate, or we're going to offer this to a larger subset of our families. Just being

transparent when those things come up. And we're having wonderings about the data. Basically communicating that in an appropriate way.

So, that's responsible. We get to respectful. Really, when we're thinking about respectful, we're thinking about it, not only with each other, within our staff structure, but certainly right beside our families. And how we honor all of our family's beliefs, values, cultural backgrounds, and their wish to do the very best they can for their children and their development. Of course, what's embedded in our structure and in our core is uplifting the family's input first and foremost, and collapsing that into what we know in our staff structure and in our continuous improvement process. For the families, making sure that we gather our data through methods that are presented in languages that are represented by our families. Making sure that we offer multiple modalities to gather and share data with families. So outside of reading and writing, maybe verbal interviews. All kinds of good things that we've been able to do over time. And some of these ideas are just confirmations of what have been already happening out in our programs. Another way to think about respect is making sure that when we share data with families, that we also offer the opportunities for them to share right back. I know I had the honor of directing a program in Virginia for a while.

And we got in sort of a stride at one point where we offered things a lot to families but we forgot to give them space to share, as well. So it was a great, great day and a great experience when we found a better balance to really create that back and forth in a better way that felt comfortable and the "R" word -- respectful for everybody. As we go on down to the third one, relevant, it's just what you would imagine. When we're thinking about doing and thinking through relevant data collection, we're really processing, answering specific questions that are being asked, producing information that's meaningful to we and our families, things that are reliable and valid, and culturally sensitive.

We want to make sure that everything that we do is specific to the families that we are currently serving at the very time that we have the honor to serve them, and making sure that we make changes based on the strengths, needs, and constellations of all the families in our programs at that point in time. Last but certainly not least, one of my very favorites. Relationship-based. Are we using data in a relationship based way? The biggest way to think about this in my mind is are we doing this in that mutual process. A little overlap, back to the respectful piece that -- are we engaging families and our community partners in the developing of questions? In the collection of information? And, those are two of the things we'll touch on today.

And then the analysis, the interpretation, the information -- Some of the things that we'll also touch on Thursday as well. What does it look like and how are we building relationships with families? Allowing them to share data with us. And then in that reciprocity, when we get to share with them, as well. And how we make improvements based on that dialogue over time. So, just a couple of thoughts there real quick to ground us in those Four R's, if you haven't looked at them in a while or if you're thinking about them now with the five-year project period, and how you're really making connections to very important work. What we'd like to do is get you to sort of engage in a little poll with us, if you wouldn't mind. So, I'd like you to get you to click over with me onto this next screen. And if you would, you'll notice that the top asks, "Which data activity are you most comfortable with?" Now, you heard Kiersten describe them quickly at the top of the webinar. Which are you most comfortable with? Prepare, collect, aggregate/analyze, or use and share? And then subsequently, at the bottom, "Which are you most concerned about?"

Again: prepare, collect, aggregate/analyze, or use and share. And what we're going to show you is where each of your colleagues fall, we're going to kind of uplift a little bit about what happens here with our poll of folks, the hundreds of you that we have here on the line. Let's see what's happening with the numbers. It looks like folks are feeling pretty good about collect, as I look at the poll on top, in terms of comfortability. And then concern, we have aggregate and analyze, coming around the bend. It looks like it's taking the lead with about 200 , -10, -15 folks. I'll give you a couple more seconds to weigh in here, the two polls on your screen. And then we'll give you the results. Alright. Well, it looks like your feedback has started to dwindle a little. Let's see. Lara, are we ready to show the -- show the results? Should we do a drum roll?

[Laughs] Drum roll, please! Oh, I see one of the polls is closed. The nerves. Here we go. It looks like the activity that most folks are most comfortable with is, dun, dun, dun, nah! Collect! Well, this should be no surprise to us. Right?

Collect is something -- I tease a little bit and say that we've done since the dawn of time. Something that we do a lot of and some of you tell us often that we probably do a little too much of. We think a little bit about how to streamline and what that looks like. But we feel pretty comfortable with collect as a data activity. Also, not so surprising, specifically as we think about family progress, to look at the one that we feel a little concerned about which is: aggregate and analyze. And I'm so thrilled to have the level of amazing expertise that we have on this line for you, not only today, but on Thursday and next Tuesday with the programs that we're going to be able to bring to you. I have the absolutely incredible honor of introducing to you now, one of the folks that I've learned so much from over the past years on our team, from Harvard Family Research Project, Dr. Elena Lopez. Let me turn it over to her and enjoy. Thank you guys.

Dr. Elena Lopez: Thank you, Brandi. Hello, I'm Elena Lopez. And I am with the National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I'm also the associate director at the Harvard Family Research Project. So today I will be guiding you in how to use the first of the four Measuring What Matters Exercises. And if you look in the handouts and resources box, you will see that you can download the Measuring What Matters Series: Exercise One, which is also available on ECLKC. So today, I will just give you some highlights from this Exercise One. Exercise One is about preparing for data collection. Preparation means that you review what you already know about families and consider what new questions you need to explore in order to improve your work with families. Preparation means that you will be using data that you already have, such as self-assessment, community assessments, and monitoring reports to set your goals, objectives, clarify outcomes, and also understand what else you need to know and what other data you ought to collect. So, let's turn first to some basic terms and definitions that we will be using not only for Exercise One but throughout the Four Data Activities. So, let's start off with goals. Goals are broad and inspirational statements. They describe what you seek to accomplish.

An example of a goal: you want to be president of the United States. Objectives are parts of goals that help you meet your goal. Examples of objectives, again, if you were thinking about running or becoming president for the United States, would be things like being in public office for at least ten years before you decide to become, run for president. Making sure that you get positive media coverage and that you have over 500,000 followers on your Twitter account. Or the other thing could be that you support legislation about education reform, including more funding for Head Start programs. Next, we go to your

expected outcomes. And that would be, what is the outcome of an election when you run for president? And the outcome could be you win or you lose.

So with that, let's now turn to the next slide which is back to Exercise One. And what's happening to Tyler Robbins who is the executive director of the Sunnyside Head Start and Early Head Start program. Tyler wants to know whether his program services are making a difference. He knows that there is a home visiting program and the number of people that participate in the home visiting program. But he also wants to go deeper and ask questions. What difference does this home visiting program make? How are families connecting with children through the home visits? What Tyler does is to form a committee to answer these questions. The committee's composed of his key staff, parent leaders, and Policy Council members. Together this group is now planning for a new data collection process. They start off by asking four important questions related to program goals, objectives, services, and expected family outcomes. So, let's start off with the first question. What PFCE goal does our program want to accomplish? As I mentioned earlier, you can use your community assessments, your monitoring reports, to understand the program's trends and also the gaps. So in the case of the Sunnyside program, the committee came up with a goal that you see on your screen. That is, Sunnyside Head Start and Early Head Start will ensure that all families have the guidance, support, and tools they need to nurture relationships with their children, guide their children's learning and development, and advocate for their children's education across transition periods.

So, the goal is broad and it's also inspirational. The next thing that the committee did then was to determine its objectives. As we said earlier, an objective is an element of a goal and it describes what the program is intending to do to reach the goal. Objectives have important characteristics. They are specific, as you can see from the highlighter, they are measurable; they are attainable and realistic; and they are also timely. In this case, the Sunnyside committee has developed its specific objectives that focuses on both building the capacity of the staff, as well as offering services, training, and materials for families. Having established the goals and objectives, the committee then asks a third and important question. What actions are we going to take to reach our objectives? You will see from the screen that Sunnyside Head Start had already established certain activities that aligned with their goals and objectives.

But they also wanted to do more and proposed new actions, such as creating more time coaching staff and asking them to use the simulations developed by the National Center on Parent Family, and Community Engagement as a for coaching and supervision. Another new action that they took would be to adjust their family literacy programs to include more library visits. So now the committee has established its goals, its objectives, and its actions. The next step then, was to clarify. What are the expected outcomes that relate to these goals, objectives, and services? We know that outcomes are the results of what Sunnyside wants to achieve for families. And this program would be responsible for showing progress towards these outcomes each year. You see on your screen the PFCE Framework and how the goals, objectives, services, and outcomes map onto the Framework. In terms of outcomes, the Sunnyside program decided that Families as Lifelong Educators would be their outcome.

But they made this rather broad outcome even more specific to families develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to promote children's learning. You will note on the screen that the goals, objectives, and services map onto the Program Foundations and Program Impact Areas. And that the expected outcomes map onto the Family Engagement Outcomes and Child Outcomes. In the booklet on

Exercise One, you can go through the same process that Tyler and his committee did by responding to the questions that you find in this template. I believe it's on page 15 of the booklet. Having gone through all these four questions, the next big question was, how do we measure our progress? The committee needed to develop measures to track two important types of information. First, measuring whether the Sunnyside program was offering the services that reflected its goals.

Second, Sunnyside also needed to measure whether there were any changes or results of their program activities. How did their program impact the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of families and staff? There are two important types of measures that I'd like to walk you through. The first is what we call measures of effort. Measures of effort count what and how much family programming is offered. They describe whether and to what extent activities were carried out as planned. So, in other words, what did they do if you have an activity like a family literacy night or a visit to a public library? How much of that? What was the exposure of families to these types of activities? And also, were families satisfied with these services and actions that the program took? Measures of efforts can be quantitative. Things like, how many hours were staff trained on parent, family, and community engagement? How many family literacy activities were held? How many home visits does each family receive? Measures of effort can also be qualitative and this qualitative measure can be obtained in parent focus groups and through debriefings after certain activities.

So, some of the questions that you might be able to answer from qualitative efforts would be, what do families like about family literacy activities? Or what suggestions do families have to improve parent teacher conferences? The other type of measure is what we call a measure of effect. It's the so what, or to what end. You conducted the family literacy activities. You conducted the parent teacher conferences. So what? What changed? Measures of effect can also be quantitative-for example, how many families read to their child every day? How many families report that teachers and home visitors encourage them to share their observations about their child's learning? Measures of effect can also be qualitative. That is, how do families interact with their child during reading? What new ideas have families learned from parent teacher conferences? You need both, the measures of effort and the measures of effect, in order to track progress.

Again, in the booklet, when you download the Exercise One, you will find a template that you can use to walk you through this exercise of determining what's the measure of effort and a measure of effect. Lastly, I'd like to mention that it's important to think about alignment. Your goals, objectives, services and actions, outcomes, and measures should all be aligned. Once you have them all aligned, then you can begin to collect data. For now, let's turn to our second poll. And Lara will help me with this. Let's review what we've learned. We talked about measures of effort and measures of effect. Which of the following questions, then, are measures of effect? We're getting some good responses here. So Lara, are we able to close the poll and assess the results?

Okay. So in terms of measures of effect. That's right-parents gaining confidence as a result of participating in parenting program. That's a change in the disposition. Another measure of effect is also staff changing their teaching practices. That's a change in practice or behavior. And, with our poll ending, I'm going to turn it over now to Margaret, who's going to talk about collecting data. Margaret?

Margaret Caspe: Thanks, Elena, and hi everyone. I'm Margaret Caspe and for the next ten minutes or so I'll be your guide on how to use Exercise Two, which is all about collecting data. From the poll at the outset of our conversation, it sounds like many of you are pretty comfortable with this data stuff, so

that's fantastic. Quite simply, collecting data means gathering information so that you can do two things: first, so that you can track progress on family outcomes; and second, so that you can assess the quality of your services and make improvements. So, this is Amelia Posada and she is the family services manager of Garden Street Head Start. When we meet her in Exercise Two, she's just at the very beginning of her five year project period.

As you can see on the screen, she and her team have spent a lot of time preparing data around her program's goal of enhancing the health and well-being of children and families. To meet this goal, her program has partnered with a health clinic to offer family activities and events around nutrition and healthy living. These activities include things like family cooking classes, trips to the grocery store, and a family Zumba dance night. As Elena was just discussing, she's even developed her measures of effort and her measures of effect. So, for her measures of effort, she wants to know the number of health clinic events offered and the number of parents who attended the events. For her measure of effect, the measure of change, she wants to know whether parents report having access to healthier foods, whether they're cooking healthier meals, and whether they're getting more exercise as a result of participation in these activities.

So, what Amelia really needs to do now is begin to actually collect the data she needs to show that she is making progress toward her goals. In other words, what she needs to do now is find tools and ways to collect information that align to these measures of effort and these measures of effect. Her first step to do this is to start to choose data collection methods. As many of you already know from your great work with children and families, many different data collection methods exist. One method is to use surveys and questionnaires. These are really great for collecting a lot of information quickly from many different people. You can develop your own surveys, you can use some that are standardized and developed by experts, and you can have participants complete surveys electronically or by paper and pencil. A second way to collect data is through interviews and focus groups. These are really great for gathering detailed, qualitative explanations of how programs operate and how stakeholders perceive them.

Then another data collection method is observation. We all know that classroom teachers are particularly well trained to observe children. I know that all of us in Head Start are familiar with the CLASS that measures observations of classroom quality. But you can also use observations to look at different elements of your PFCE work, such as how families and teachers are communicating or ways parents are interacting with their children. Finally, tests and assessments can be used specifically to quantify some aspects of the PFCE work you want to know more about. For example, you might choose an assessment of family functioning or you might even engage families as assessors of children's development.

As you can see on the screen, Ages & Stages is a tool for just that. It's a screening instrument that assesses children's development at different periods of time and lets families provide specific input on how children are learning and developing. So really -- So the main takeaway here is that there are lots of ways to collect data. But it's important to keep in mind a few things when you're selecting your data collection tools. The first and foremost is that there are advantages and disadvantages to every data collection method. For example, we just talked about surveys as being easy to develop. And they can measure a broad range of data, like attitudes, opinions, and beliefs. But at the same time, survey questions often end up being very broad and sometimes don't capture how people are thinking and the nuances of why people are responding to questions the way that they are.

There are other things to keep in mind too. It's important to link new data collection efforts to existing ones. Every time you collect data it doesn't have to be a completely new herculean project. You also want to think about using a variety of data collection methods so that you can feel confident about your results and paint a more complete picture of your work. And maybe most importantly, make sure that the method that you choose resonates with the language and the culture of the families in your programs.

Let's go back to Data Exercise Two for a second. If you remember Amelia, she and her team picked out the following methods to align with her measures of effort and effect. So, this is in the red column to the right. So to measure of the number of healthy clinic events offered and the number of parents who attended the events, her team will be collecting sign in sheets from each event. And to know whether parents report having access to healthier foods or cooking healthier meals and getting more exercise, her team's going to do three things. They're going to conduct a parent focus group at the end of the year. They're going to embed some new survey items into their family partnership survey. They're also going to have a small group of parents complete food diaries over the course of the project so that her program can better understand some of the specific changes families are making to their cooking and eating.

The next step-once you've chosen your data collection methods-is to develop a data collection plan. And a data collection plan really lets you figure out all those really teeny, tiny logistical things that you need to collect data effectively. You need to figure out who will collect the data, right? Are you going to ask teachers to collect data? Families? Family advocates? Or maybe you're going to hire outside consultants to do the work. You also need to think about how often the data will be collected. And you also need to think about how to train data collectors. This is probably one of the most important, but overlooked, parts of the data collection process. You see, you want to collect good data. Right? But if data are not collected consistently and accurately, in the same way across different people at different times, you won't have a lot of trust in the data you get back.

This makes your efforts somewhat meaningless. Good training means it's more likely that you'll get good data. Training staff is also important because it also builds capacity for data use and buy-in among staff for why collecting data is so important. What you see on the screen in front of you is a template for a data collection plan that you can use in your own work. This is Table in Exercise Two. You can see it on the screen. In Exercise Two, we also show you the data collection plan that Amelia had her team had developed in their program, so that you can get a feel for what this type of planning and organization can look like. And then last, the third step in data collection is to actually collect your data. When you collect data, you need to be organized and pay attention to how you monitor your efforts. I know and I've talked to a lot of data managers and program leaders who like to have charts like the one on your screen hanging up on their walls in their office to help them see visually when data collection needs to take place and has to happen.

Last but not least, you'll need to consider where you will enter and store the data you've collected to ensure that you're maintaining privacy and confidentiality of all of the respondents. This is actually a really good time to hand it back to Carolina, who I believe is going to open up the conversation to some good questions and answers.

Carolina Buitrago: Thank you, Maggie. And thank you to all our presenters. Let's open it up for questions. We've been getting great questions. Let's get started with the following one. In looking

through the questions coming in, a lot of the questions are centered around making sure that data collection instruments are sensitive to cultural differences. Brandi, or Elena, and Maggie, could you comment on that?

Maggie: Sure. I'll go ahead. When I think about this I think there are three things. When you're developing, if you're developing your own survey, for example, a great way to start is to potentially hold focus groups and really understand what parents are thinking, how families, you know, whatever the question is that you're trying to measure. You know, talking first with families and also understanding some of the research behind what you're, you know, you're trying to measure. You know, and then if you're trying -- thinking of using tools that have already been pre-established and pre-developed, you want to always make sure that they've been normed and developed with the populations in mind that you're considering using the tools with. Elena or Brandi, did you want to jump in?

Elena: I was going to say something similar to what you said, Maggie. Sometimes it's just being able to learn and observe from parents. How do they find information that they need? Do they ask questions? And how do they ask those questions? So just pay attention, you know, in the day-to-day interactions with families so that you have the opportunity to really find out what matters for them. And make sure that you include those cultural and linguistic preferences as you develop your data collection instrument.

Brandi: Maggie and Elena, I love what both of you have offered. And just for you guys out there who have been thinking about what this really looks like as you think through your own data, think about the families you have the honor to serve and partner beside and all of the wonderful cultures they might represent. What we've been busy doing at the Center is compiling some of the great tools that are out there that are reliable and valid. What we've learned over time is that it may not be necessary for you to have to invest, purchase, or corral any of those kinds of tools. This depends on what your data are telling you what you want to do longitudinally, and what you want to do -- whether it's qualitative, quantitative. It just depends on what your focus is. And that's the whole impetus behind Measuring What Matters.

The reason we chose that title for this kind of approach was, it's really measuring what matters to you, your families, and your community. So, we've been busy putting together what we call a compilation document. If you get to the place of really looking at a reliable and valid instrument, we've put them all in one place for you. The list is not exhaustive. But we've done a lot of great work in organizing it, aligning it by the seven Family Engagement Outcomes that are in the blue column of the PFCE Framework. We have it in draft form currently and hope that this summer we'll be putting it up on ECLKC for you guys to look at and see, based on the data that you have, that you're using in your program, and really thinking through how certain tools may support you in your own neck of the woods. And there is information in there about how it may support specific languages or not. So, to Maggie's point, looking at where and how the tools may have been normed, and on which groups of folks, and how that may or may not align with where you're going. We've been trying to pull that together for you guys so that you'd have something to reference as you think about what you're doing specifically in your program.

Elena: I just want to add that in each of the Data Exercises, you will find a section about how you can engage families as you prepare to collect data and as you prepare to analyze and aggregate data, and as

you plan to use and share data. So, I think these steps will help you in terms of making the data collection process relevant for all families.

Carolina: Thank you, Elena, Maggie, and Brandi. People were also wondering. Some participants, Brandi, were wondering where they can get more information about the Four R's.

Brandi: Oh goodness. We actually have been thinking a lot about the Four R's, and we even have some work on the Four R's that are dissected by the Four Data Activities, you know. You know how we do.

[Laughs]

In Head Start/Early Head Start. So we even have a bit more detailed information than what I offered. The first place to look is in our seminal document. If you guys have been on the ECLKC, you can go and find us under Training & Technical Assistance, and of course the Parent, Family, Community Engagement page. We have some red tabs on the top. And the place that you'll find our Measuring What Matters document first and foremost is under our Assessing Progress tab. You'll find a couple of pages in that document. But I believe we could also make available some more of the work that we've been doing expanding that thinking on the Four R's, as it relates to each of the Four Data Activities specifically. We've been thinking, well, what do the Four R's look like for prepare. And how do they look different for collect? If you guys feel like that could be helpful for you as you're thinking about this as a team with your families, we could get that to you.

Carolina: Thank you, Brandi. Our next question is actually about data accuracy. Some participants were wondering about some helpful tips and ideas for increasing the precision of data, especially once the data is collected. How do you enter it correctly? And how do you make sure that it's the most accurate possible? Maggie, perhaps some thoughts on that?

Maggie: Sure. So I think I mentioned this a little bit in the presentation. But training data collectors is just so important. Because if people are not implementing-if data collectors are not collecting data in the same way across different programs, at different sites, with different families, the data are not as trustworthy as you would expect. But after the data process, different people collect and enter data in different ways. I know that we're going to talk a little bit about this on Thursday-we touch on this in Exercise Three, as well. There are so many different ways to enter data. Some programs, you know, like to -- if you're doing, if you're using a survey, potentially do surveys in paper and pencil, and enter data into Excel spreadsheets.

A lot of -- Most programs have a data management system. Many software developers work with you to enter data into these data management systems. We have a learning community of different programs that we talk with as the National Center. We've learned a lot about some of the great tools and data management systems that they've put together in order to collect family related data. A lot of programs, on the fly, will use a tool like Survey Monkey. If they have a tool, either having families directly answer questions on Survey Monkey, or potentially, a family advocate asks a family member a question and then goes back and enters things into Survey Monkey. But training not only at the level of how to collect the data but also how to enter it. And going back and always rechecking data-taking. If data had been collected on paper and pencil, taking a few moments, as a data manager or program leader, to look at the Excel spreadsheet that you have and the hard-copy paper that you have and randomly choose a few to make sure that they coincide and that they're accurate and the same.

Carolina: Thank you, Maggie. Another question that has come up is also about data collection. It has to do with potential suggestions for when you sense families are giving the right answers to the questions either in the survey or on interview. Does any of you want to weigh in?

Elena: Carolina, it wasn't so clear. Can you, can you repeat the question?

Carolina: Sure. The question was about data collection. And it says, what do you suggest when you sense that families are giving the right answer when you are interviewing them or when you are administering a survey.

Brandi: Oh gosh. This is Brandi. I'm going to give it a try, and you guys can tell us in chat if this is on the right track. Here's a story that I heard just a couple of weeks ago out in one of the Regions. There was a family who was juggling some very real issues at home. Later, our staff colleagues found out it was about domestic violence. During the initial intake, the family of course was very guarded about being open with that kind of information. I wonder if your question implies that the family was giving information that they thought was perhaps what the staff wanted to hear and created a picture that felt a little more rose-colored than the actual situation at home. It wasn't until our staff colleague continued with the visits, continued in conversation, continued in building the relationship, that ultimately, I think, as your question stated, that the truth was revealed later, in some of those conversations. Then they were able to circle back and talk about what supports were necessary, what kinds of things the family wanted to think about and talk about, based on the family's vision and needs and strengths at the time. But what came of that conversation was actually related to this topic, which was-wow, had we never been able to take a step back, had we never been able to continue the dialogue and follow the family's comfort level, then we wouldn't have been able to see the level of progress that the family not only made in relationship with us, but ultimately that the family ended up making over time with the support of the staff. So, the lesson for that program-and Maggie and Elena, please add to this-was that we all have our instincts about what's happening and what families are leading us to, or not. But the core of the message for them was staying in relationship. We followed the family's comfort. And we honored it in the time that they needed us to. And then, we took action as they hoped-when the story became-when some of the real of their story was revealed later. Not sure if that's helpful, so Maggie and Elena, you guys jump in too. But that was a real example we got just a couple of weeks ago.

Elena: I think that's an excellent example, Brandi. And I think it goes back to Maggie's earlier point about the importance of training staff. In this case, when you're dealing with families, just to develop that personal relationship, as Brandi mentioned, just building that relationship to a point where you can get an honest picture of the family's situation.

Carolina: Thank you everyone for raising all these relevant questions and to the presenters for sharing all these important insights and their expertise on these topics. We are going to move on. We are going to conclude this webinar today with a five minute chat. You will see a few different chat boxes on your screen. Please use the water cooler chat for informal conversations with your colleagues from around the country. If you have questions for your peers, please use the colleague conference chat box. We encourage you to ask each other questions about your experience in preparing and collecting PFCE data. Our presenters will be answering more of your questions in the presenter chat.

[End video]